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Beer Permit Application

Dear Reader:

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We hope this information will be useful to you; reference to it will assist you with many of the questions that will arise in your tenure with county government. However, the *Tennessee Code Annotated* and other relevant laws or regulations should always be consulted before any action is taken based upon the contents of this document.

Please feel free to contact us if you have questions or comments regarding this information or any other CTAS website material.

Sincerely,

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Beer Permit Application

Reference Number: CTAS-347

The owner of a business desiring to sell, distribute, manufacture or store beer in a Class A county outside the limits of any incorporated town or city must file an application for a permit with the county beer board. T.C.A. § 57-5-105. The application must be filed by the owner of the business, and it must contain the following information as set out in T.C.A. § 57-5-105(c):

1. Name of the applicant (the owner of the business);
2. Name of the business;
3. Location of the business by street address or other geographical description sufficient to determine conformity with applicable requirements;
4. If the applicant desires to sell beer at two or more restaurants or other businesses within the same building under the same permit, a description of each of the businesses;
5. All persons, firms, corporations, joint-stock companies, syndicates or associations having at least a five percent (5%) ownership interest in the applicant (owner of the business);
6. Identity and address of a representative to receive annual tax notices and any other communication from the county beer board;
7. That no person, firm, joint-stock company, syndicate or association having at least a five percent (5%) interest in the applicant nor any person to be employed in the distribution or sale of beer has been convicted of any violation of the laws against possession, sale, manufacture, or transportation of beer or other alcoholic beverages or any crime involving moral turpitude within the past ten (10) years;
8. Whether the applicant is applying for a permit which would allow the sale of beer for either on-premises consumption or for off-premises consumption, or both;
9. Any other information as may reasonably be required by the county beer board.

Sample Beer Permit Application

An applicant (and a permit holder) is required to amend or supplement the application promptly if a change in circumstances occurs which would affect the responses given in the application. T.C.A. § 57-5-105(c)(9). Any applicant who makes a false statement in the application shall forfeit the applicant's permit and shall not be eligible for a permit for a period of ten (10) years. T.C.A. § 57-5-105(d).

In order to receive a permit, an applicant also must establish that:

1. No beer will be sold except at places where the sale will not cause congestion of traffic or interference with schools, churches, or other places of public gathering, or otherwise interfere with public health, safety and morals (and if the county legislative body has adopted a distance rule by resolution, that the business is not in violation of the rule). T.C.A. § 57-5-105(b)(1).
2. No sale will be made to minors. T.C.A. § 57-5-105(b)(2).
3. That no person, firm, corporation, joint-stock company, syndicate or association having at least a five percent (5%) ownership interest in the business has been convicted of any violation of the laws against possession, sale, manufacture, or transportation of beer or other alcoholic beverages, or the manufacture, delivery, sale or possession with intent to manufacture, deliver or sell any controlled substance or controlled substance analogue, or any crime involving moral turpitude within the past ten (10) years. T.C.A. § 57-5-105(b)(3).
4. No person employed by the applicant in the distribution or sale of beer has been convicted of any violation of the laws against possession, sale, manufacture, or transportation of beer or other alcoholic beverages, or the manufacture, delivery, sale or possession with intent to manufacture, deliver or sell any controlled substance that is listed in Schedules I through V in title 39, chapter 17, part 4, or the manufacture, delivery, sale or possession with intent to manufacture, deliver or sell any controlled substance analogue, or any crime involving moral turpitude within the last 10 years. T.C.A. § 57-5-105(b)(4).
5. That no sales for on-premises consumption will be made unless the application so states. T.C.A. § 57-5-105(b)(5).

Crimes involving moral turpitude refer to acts of baseness, vileness, or depravity in the private and social duties which a person owes to other persons or to society in general, contrary to the accepted rules of right and duty. Brooks v. State, 187 Tenn. 67, 213 S.W.2d 7 (1948). Crimes of rolling high dice for a Coke and failing to immediately release 17 bluegills are not crimes involving moral turpitude. Gibson v. Ferguson, 562 S.W.2d 188 (Tenn. 1976). Driving under the influence (DUI) and reckless driving are not considered crimes of moral turpitude. Attorney General Opinions 95-37 (4/19/97) and 08-108 (5/14/08). The sale of beer to a minor or to a person not presenting proper identification is not a crime of moral turpitude. Attorney General Opinion 09-41 (3/25/09) (however, this would be a violation of the laws against possession, sale, manufacture, or transportation of beer or other alcoholic beverages). The offense of vehicular homicide, on the other hand, is a crime of moral turpitude. Attorney General Opinion 98 225 (12/1/98). In Opinion No. 08-108 (5/14/08), the Attorney General discusses the law on moral turpitude in detail and lists other behavior that has been held to constitute moral turpitude.

In addition to the requirements listed above, all beer permit holders are required to provide the county with documentation that they are duly registered with the Commissioner of Revenue for sales tax purposes. A new permit holder must provide this documentation within ten (10) days following approval of the permit. The required documentation is an actual copy of the registration certificate indicating that the purchase of beer is "for resale" by the beer permit holder. Permit holders are required to maintain a copy of a valid resale certificate on file with the county. T.C.A. § 57-5-103. Persons engaging in the manufacture or wholesale distribution of beer are also required to register with the Commissioner of Revenue and receive a certificate of registration, which must be posted at the location prior to commencement of any business. T.C.A. § 57-5-102.

A 2015 amendment to T.C.A. § 57-5-103(a) provides that a beer permit cannot be issued to an applicant who has not been a citizen or lawful resident of the United States for at least one year immediately prior to the date of the application. However, the constitutionality of this provision has been called into question by the Tennessee Attorney General in Opinion No. 16-09 (3/4/16).

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